

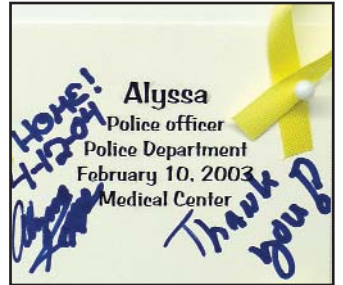
## “Life is great!” — Alyssa Kopp

In a display case located in the south lobby, is a thank you to those employees who have or are serving in the armed forces. Alyssa Kopp, a VA police officer, has been back to work two weeks after serving with the 814th Military Police Company based in Chicago. Officer Kopp has been called up twice. First serving at Fort Hood (10 months) and then a few months later in Baghdad (14 months including in-state training). Her time away is greater than her time in a VA police uniform. She smiles while talking of her return and is grateful for the support and especially the "girly package" sent to her by the AOD's. *We're glad you're here!*



photos by Alex Sukys

# 5000 West



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Have anything going on the first weekend in June?

## Talent needed

If you are just hanging out on June 5 and 6, why not consider volunteering at the 3rd Annual Reclaiming Our Heritage, a multi-era military encampment. The event on the Medical Center grounds continues to expand, and there's fun for everyone. You don't have to commit to both days, but a few hours would be helpful. And, if the timing does not work on the June dates, consider the pre-event set up. "Volunteers will be placed where their interests and talents lie," says Nancy Pegelow who is co-coordinating volunteer recruitment. "For those who like to take charge, there are places for you too."

Direct questions about volunteering to Ms. Pegelow via VISTA, Outlook or call her at 414 384-2000, extension 42005.

Ms. Pegelow also encourages making this a family affair. "Whether you can help for a couple of hours, or a couple of days, we've got the perfect place for you — your significant other, and for your older kids, and for your aunts and uncles and...."

## Wear your herita

This seal is painted on the header across the front of the stage in the Ward Memorial Theater located on the Medical Center grounds. In its high, dimly lit place, it is displayed, in what is believed to be, the original paint. This hallmark was also made into a badge and proudly worn by members of the Soldiers Home. On the very old pictures, the badge can be identified on their uniforms. In those early days, everything had the seal on it, from urinals and bedpans to dinnerware.

This official seal is part of your heritage. It is the seal of The National Home for Disabled Volunteer Soldiers, a name of the Medical Center in its past.

The badge has been reproduced thanks to the generosity of Robert Erffmeyer of ESCO, Inc. It will be sold at Reclaiming Our Heritage, and through a special introductory offer, you can purchase yours at the VA Credit Union for \$5. The price will be higher at the event.

The history of the badge goes back to the by-laws of the National Home for Disabled Volunteer Soldiers. "The Board of Managers hereby establish a common seal. The seal shall bear as a device, an emblematic figure of Columbia offering relief to a disabled soldier with the motto, The Nation to her Defenders, surrounded by the title and date of the act." In the 1867 Proceedings of the Board of Managers of National Asylum for Disabled Volunteer Soldiers it is written: "On motion, the President of the Board was instructed to devise a suitable badge to be firmly attached to the uniform and at all times worn by each beneficiary of the Asylum." The name was later changed to the National Home (rather than asylum).





**The new Medical College of Wisconsin telephone directory** is available for pick-up in voluntary service (room 70-C-16). Please call 41803 to confirm someone is available to assist you. You can also access the Medical College directory by going to <http://InfoScope.mcw.edu/> and look for Jumpstart, MCW Phone Book on the right hand side of the page.

**"A lie can travel halfway around the world while the truth is putting on its shoes" -- Mark Twain.**  
As a private citizen you can take issue with the (mis)representations by ABC's PrimeTime of the Veterans Health Administration. You are encouraged to make your voice heard and submit your comments and stories about the care you give and receive on the public internet website [www.VAPride.US](http://www.VAPride.US)

**On the morning of 6th June 1944**, Allied troops began landing on the beaches of Normandy in France. So began the greatest seaborne invasion in history and

with it the eventual liberation of Europe and the end of the Second World War. D-Day veterans will be recognized this year on the 60th anniversary of the infamous invasion. If you are a veteran who participated in storming the beaches of France on D-Day and want to share your story, contact the public relations office by May 4 (414 382-5363).

**Wildlife in our backyard.** Victor Trapp and his wife Marlene don't live too far from here, but they spend a lot of time at Lake Wheeler behind the Medical Center. For several years they have been taking pictures of the swans, Willow and Whisper, and other wildlife in the pond that provides an ecological respite for creatures large and small. Now, as technology has progressed, VJT Design Service has a website to include video. This is a great place to see what is happening and is updated weekly on Sunday. You can access the website at <http://vjtdesignservice.com>



the amazing

*Frank A. Schlaefer*

**Frank Schlaefer** is a lot like you, but then again, maybe he isn't. Frank gets up early to get to the Medical Center. Before that, he puts out the dogs, and then walks to the corner to catch the 4:45 (that's a.m.) bus to be on time for work at 6. However, since it is spring, he is now taking his motor scooter down those dark streets. It is a 49cc Yamaha that makes the hills a lot easier than walking. At 76 he prefers the mechanized form of transportation.

He works all day on 9A-South, a nursing home care unit, doing just about everything, goes home, has a beer, tackles the crossword and then maybe takes a little nap before supper. Frank works five days a week and this is where the similarity may end: He works for free, nothing, nada, zero. Frank is a volunteer.

is published for all volunteers, but this edition is especially for **Frank A. Schlaefer** who in his 13 years at the Medical Center has donated over 21,331 hours — in the past



Frank Schlaefer has used his feet, a bike, the bus and now a scooter to go back and forth to work. He wears a helmet when it is raining.

year, 1,000 plus hours. That is an amazing amount of time, and he does it because, "I enjoy giving the guys the raspberries like they do to me." Frank has a good time.

Frank is an Army Air Corps veteran enlisting after graduating from West Division High School in 1945. He went to Germany right after finishing weather observer school at Chanute, IL. After returning to Milwaukee, he married Rosemary and they raised four children. The majority of his life Frank was a truck driver, and for seven years, he and Rosemary had a bar, *Frank's Never Inn*. When the building was sold, that was the end of the barkeeper business.

Frank lost his wife when she was 52, and today lives with his daughter and family about three miles from the Medical Center. He likes to cook and jokes that he taught his wife how. His favorite is baking cheesecakes. In his younger days, he was big into softball, playing 3rd base for about 45 years. He enjoys all sports, but now as a spectator watching on TV.

You could say his current hobby is the Medical Center. He knows all of the patients and many of their families.

He is integral in the nursing home's party scene. He also can be seen at Rudman Park behind the grill or in the morning watering the plants.

Frank is a people person, and I'm sure was a great bartender. He uses those skills as a great volunteer — taking the time to listen and to help.

On May 3, Frank will be recognized with the James H. Parke Achievement Award Silver Tray at the annual VA voluntary service awards dinner. It is a well-deserved recognition. But for Frank, he would do it anyway.

— john w. zewiske



**5000 West**

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The community relations office publishes *5000 West* bi-weekly as a channel of communication for employees, volunteers, patients and friends. *5000 West* is committed to enhancing the image of the Medical Center and its employees and volunteers through information, recognition and entertainment.

Articles of interest are welcome. The editor reserves the right to use and edit contributed stories. Submission deadline is two days prior to publication. Your comments are encouraged and should be directed to editor (002) 5000 West, VA Medical Center, Milwaukee, WI 53295:

telephone (414) 382-5363 or (888) 469-6614, extension 45363 or e-mail [john.zewiske@med.va.gov](mailto:john.zewiske@med.va.gov)

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